

STATE OF INDIANA

STATE STUDENT ASSISTANCE COMMISSION OF INDIANA



INDIANA GOVERNMENT CENTER SOUTH
402 WEST WASHINGTON STREET, ROOM 462
INDIANAPOLIS, IN 46204
PHONE (317) 232-2350
FAX (317) 232-3260

TO: Indiana School Superintendents, Principals, School Counselors, and Higher Education Financial Aid Offices

FROM: Mary Jane Michalak, Executive Director *umjm*

RE: Mitch Daniels Early Graduation Scholarship

DATE: June 15, 2012

The 2011 Indiana General Assembly passed IC-21-12-10 to establish a scholarship for students who graduate at least one (1) complete year early from a publicly supported school. The Mitch Daniels Early Graduation Scholarship ("Scholarship") covers \$4,000 of tuition and regularly assessed fees (fees charged to all students) as defined by the Indiana Commission for Higher Education ("CHE") and the State Student Assistance Commission of Indiana ("SSACI"), to attend a SSACI-approved eligible higher education institution. The Scholarship is paid by SSACI to colleges on behalf of the eligible student upon receipt of a bill and is paid out of the State General Fund. The balance of the Scholarship, if any exists, shall be remitted to the student.

An individual is eligible for the Scholarship, if the student:

- 1) is a resident of Indiana;
- 2) attended a publicly supported school (defined in IC 21-12-10-1) on a full time equivalency basis for at least the last two semesters before the individual graduated;
- 3) had legal settlement in Indiana for at least the last two semesters before graduating;
- 4) met at least the minimum requirements set by the Indiana State Board of Education for granting a high school diploma by the end of grade 11 (including summer school courses completed by July 1 of a year) and was awarded after December 31, 2010, a high school diploma by the publicly supported school that the individual last attended for course credits earned before the end of grade 11, including any summer school courses completed before July 1 of a year;
- 5) was not enrolled in a publicly supported school for any part of grade 12; of the fourth year (12);
- 6) applies to SSACI (see "How to Apply" section); and
- 7) within five (5) months after graduating from high school, becomes a student in good standing taking classes at an approved postsecondary educational institution whose students are eligible to receive a higher education award (IC 21-12-3-11) or a freedom of choice grant (IC 21-12-4-4) and is engaged in a program that will lead to an approved postsecondary degree or credential. A list of SSACI eligible colleges can be found at <http://www.in.gov/ssaci/2334.htm>.

SSACI must verify that the student's matriculation, Scholarship application and FAFSA filing and contents meet the requirements for the student to be eligible for the Scholarship before the college may

bill SSACI for the eligible student. Colleges must refund to SSACI any funds provided to colleges on behalf of students who are later discovered to be ineligible for the Scholarship.

Students with a General Diploma who are graduating early are not considered eligible for the Scholarship. The student in this situation has chosen to "opt out" of the minimum graduation requirements of Core 40, and by graduating early the student is choosing not to exhaust all options to meet the Core 40 diploma requirements. Student applicants for the Scholarship must pass the Algebra I and English 10 End of Course assessments and must graduate before July 1 of the applicable year, including any summer school courses completed before July 1 of a year.

How to Apply

The Scholarship application is available online at <https://forms.in.gov/Download.aspx?id=10271>. The application must be received by SSACI no later than September 4, 2012. To be considered for eligibility, applicants also must file the appropriate academic year's Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) at www.fafsa.ed.gov, and it must be received by the federal Central Processing System (CPS) no later than September 4, 2012. For example, students should file a 2012-2013 FAFSA for the 2012-2013 academic year. SSACI will verify the applicant's eligibility for the Scholarship. This is a one-time benefit and may not be renewed.

Students should follow the steps below to apply.

1. Download and complete the "Student Data" section of the application.
2. Bring the form to the high school from which the student graduates.
3. Have the high school complete and verify the "High School Data" section. **This application must be signed by the high school principal or the superintendent of the school corporation from which the student graduates and notarized.** *Please note that the high school verification section of the application should not be completed until the student has satisfied all graduation requirements.*
4. After the Scholarship application has been signed and validated by the high school principal or school corporation superintendent, mail the signed application to SSACI. The application must be received by SSACI no later than September 4, 2012. **This form may not be provided via fax at any step of the application process.**
 - a. Mailed applications should be sent to the following:
State Student Assistance Commission of Indiana (SSACI)
ATTN: Mitch Daniels Early Graduation Scholarship
402 W. Washington Street W462
Indianapolis, IN 46204
5. File a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) for the year in which the student graduates high school. If the student is graduating in June 2012, the student should file a 2012-2013 FAFSA, which must be received at the federal Central Processing System by September 4, 2012).

Questions regarding eligibility based on early graduation should be directed to the Indiana Department of Education at 317.232.0510 or 317.234.2134. Questions regarding Scholarship payments should be directed to SSACI at 317.232.2350 or ahdc40@ssaci.in.gov. Student inquiries should be directed to SSACI at 317.232.2350 or grants@ssaci.in.gov.